



LEROY D. BACA, SHERIFF

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Sheriff's Department Headquarters
4700 Ramona Boulevard
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December 30, 2004

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**RESPONSE REGARDING INMATE ESCAPE FROM TWIN TOWERS
CORRECTIONAL FACILITY ON DECEMBER 9, 2004**

On December 14, 2004, Supervisor Burke requested a written report on the December 9, 2004, inmate escape from Twin Towers, detailing the circumstances involved in the escape, as well as the steps that the Sheriff's Department will implement to prevent similar escapes in the future.

On December 9, 2004, at approximately 1945 hours, Inmate Roger Nyles escaped from the Twin Towers Correctional Facility. He escaped from the Tower Two work dock, an outside area within the gated perimeter of the jail, located just east of Vignes Avenue.

Inmate Nyles was arrested on August 26, 2004, by the Pasadena Police Department for an alleged drug violation. Additionally, Inmate Nyles was charged with a parole violation. After appearing in court, the alleged narcotic violation was dismissed and he was remanded to the custody of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department to await transfer to a state facility.

While in custody, Inmate Nyles received clearance to become an inside inmate worker, previously referred to as a "trustee." He was permitted to perform in this capacity only while inside the confinements of the correctional facility. At one time during his stay, Inmate Nyles approached the Prisoner Personnel Office (PPO) and asked to be an outside inmate worker, but was denied approval based on his classification and security level.

A Tradition of Service

Inmate Nyles contends that he offered to work as an outside worker on the day of his escape when a Sheriff's Department employee asked for volunteers. He said he was checked out of the housing area and taken to the Tower Two dock where he worked with two (2) other inmate workers doing general labor. He said he was positioned at the bottom of a ramp area so he could wash trash cans. After seeing the west gate open for a transportation bus entering the compound, Inmate Nyles said he saw the street and made a run for the opened gate, fleeing from the facility on foot.

A custody assistant, who was working the Medical Services Bureau (MSB) control booth, was watching the monitor of the surveillance camera when she believed she saw someone run out the opened gate and out of view. Because it happened so quickly and the monitor does not capture a view of the street, she called appropriate personnel to report what she had just seen. An immediate lock down of the facility was initiated and a command post was set up for deployment of Emergency Response Teams. Additionally, the Los Angeles Police Department responded to assist. During this time, an inmate count at Twin Towers Correctional Facility confirmed that Inmate Nyles was the inmate who had escaped from custody. After a significant effort to recapture Inmate Nyles met with negative results, the search was called off, and all personnel involved in the search were returned to their regular duties.

Continued efforts were made by Major Crimes Bureau to recapture Inmate Nyles and, as a result, on December 12, 2004, he turned himself in to the Pasadena Police Department. He was subsequently returned to the Sheriff's Department's custody where he was re-booked and charged with Escape. Inmate Nyles is currently being held in Men's Central Jail and has been appropriately reclassified as a high security escape risk.

A review of our records shows that Inmate Nyles had been screened and cleared by PPO as an inmate worker with restricted status to work indoors only. Inmate Nyles was properly placed in a module where inmates who are cleared for either indoor or outdoor worker status are housed. If each category of inmate worker was segregated into separate housing modules, it would create empty bed spaces in each module, causing additional staffing shortages, and further reducing the percentage time served by inmates. At some point, personnel asked for a volunteer to work on an outdoor crew to fill an inmate worker vacancy and Inmate Nyles volunteered.

Inmate Nyles remains consistent in saying his escape was a crime of opportunity. However, contrary to his denial of premeditation, the fact remains that he made an initial inquiry to PPO about becoming an outside worker and, after being rejected, volunteered as a loading dock worker.

Several Twin Towers Correctional Facility Unit orders have been reviewed as a result of this escape. Unit Order 5-17-070 outlines procedures for selecting both inside and

outside inmate workers. Although the Unit Order is currently specific to female workers, male workers are now utilized for inside and outside work and a revision to the policy is pending. It appears all procedures were properly followed by the PPO when screening Inmate Nyles, hence his restricted status for inside work only. Unit Order 5-50-080 outlines the procedures for the loading dock and sally port slider operations. No security violations related to this section have been identified.

Proper procedures and step-by-step instructions for checking out inmate workers were in place at the time of Inmate Nyles' escape. The preliminary review of this incident has revealed that employee(s) involved did not follow those procedures, and an Administrative Investigation is currently being conducted to identify the employee(s). Recurrent briefings and training will become part of policy enforcement in an effort to prevent future incidents from occurring.

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Chief John Scott, of Custody Operations Division, at (213) 893-5001.

Sincerely,


LEROY D. BACA
SHERIFF